

Happy Memorial Day.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from American Samoa (Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. POE addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

#### DEMOCRATS NOT REVEALING THEIR HAND ON SOCIAL SECURITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. FOLEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. FOLEY. Mr. Speaker, I was stunned today when I picked up a copy of *The Hill* magazine and saw an article written by Hans Nichols, and the headline was "Rubin Urges Democrats Not to Reveal Their Hand, Clinton Aide Tells Party to Hold Firm on Social Security."

They go on to describe, "The steward of President Clinton's economic policy told the House Democratic Caucus yesterday that it needs to continue to hold firm in opposition to the President's plan and advised Democrats not to introduce their own plan, according to aides and lawmakers in the meeting."

It goes on to say, "The aide said that Rubin told his party that his party's colleagues would be hard-pressed to win a battle of specifics."

Hard-pressed to win a battle of specifics, this from the former Treasury Secretary, a man largely credited with building the international reputation of Goldman Sachs, which is all about specifics, tells the party, the Democrats, not to offer specifics.

And they say, "Democratic lawmakers said that the encouragement from a Clinton administration figure would steel the Caucus in its resolve to defeat the President's plan." Steel the caucus to defeat a plan. Of course, they do not have one of their own.

Since they are using President Clinton as an example, his experts say, "Do not offer a plan," let me read to you Morton Kondracke's editorial, "Democrats Need Their Own Social Security Plan."

"It is time for Democrats to declare what kind of Social Security reform they favor. Even former President Clinton thinks so. Yet the Democrats persist in attacking President Bush's ideas, often misleadingly.

President Clinton told ABC's "Good Morning, America" in an exchange curiously not broadcast, curiously not broadcast, "I think Democrats should

say what they are for on Social Security in the next couple weeks. Democrats should have a plan and they should talk to the President and congressional Republicans about it."

"According to ABC's political blog, The Note, Clinton said he didn't think Democrats deserved criticism for not producing a plan yet, but they still had time to produce one. He added, 'I think they need to come up with a plan of their own.'

"One Member," the gentleman from Florida, ROBERT WEXLER, whom I respect and admire, "came up with a plan and he was largely booed by his colleagues." Largely booed. "According to numerous aides, minority leader PELOSI's strategy is to wait until we see the whites of their eyes before offering a Democratic alternative. Democratic leadership aides were critical of Wexler's timing, saying it clashed with PELOSI's strategy of waiting until they see the whites of their eyes before offering a Democratic alternative."

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Wait until they see the whites of their eyes. Like this is a battle, like this is a combat mission. It is, after all, about saving Social Security for future generations, not about fighting an enemy force. Seeing the whites of their eyes has largely been equated to battle, to taking down the enemy. They are using those same kinds of conversations about American citizens trying to build a safety net in Social Security.

Lo and behold: "Teamsters President Praises Bush's Social Security Work. Teamsters President James P. Hoffa, breaking his estrangement from the White House, praised President Bush on Tuesday for attempting to fix Social Security and said Democrats were wrong to oppose any discussion until Mr. Bush drops his personal retirement account plan." That is Jimmy Hoffa representing 1.4 million members of a union. And he said he was willing to work with the administration and the Republican majority in Congress to come up with a bipartisan solution.

I quote Mr. Hoffa: "Social Security is a major problem in this country. We have to make sure that it is preserved for those that come after us," Mr. Hoffa said in an interview with Gannett News Service. "I think President Bush should be given credit for the fact that he has initiated a debate regarding what we should do."

Now let me read some quotes from Democrats who, when President Clinton had a plan, oh, they were enthusiastic. This refers to President Clinton: "This fiscal crisis in Social Security affects every generation."

Let us read HARRY REID, the minority leader of the Senate: "Most of us have no problem with taking a small amount of the Social Security proceeds and putting it into the private sector."

When asked by Tony Snow on Fox News, "Are you opposed to letting people make the investment decisions? In

other words, having some component where they say, I will save the money rather than letting Uncle Sam doing it for me?" Senator REID in 1999: "I think it is important that we look, and I am totally in favor to do this. And, in fact, there are a couple of programs now that we are taking a look at to see if it works for Social Security."

Now, I agree in my heart that there is opportunity for negotiations, but simply saying "no" by the Democrats is unacceptable to every senior and every future generation to follow.

#### EDUCATION FUNDING

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. KUHL of New York). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. WU) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. WU. Mr. Speaker, on Monday, May 23, I read a disturbing story in *The Oregonian* newspaper. It was not about the war in Iraq, the rise of unemployment in Oregon, or even the growing problem with methamphetamine abuse. Instead, this story focused on a school fundraiser.

What was so disturbing about this fundraiser is that the students and their parents at Redland Elementary School in Oregon City were hosting a jog-a-thon to raise money to hire a physical education teacher. It was not for band uniforms, not for supplies, or even for a field trip; it was to hire a teacher. The parents and students have hosted this fundraiser every year since 1994 when the school district no longer had enough money to pay for a PE teacher.

Sadly, this is not the first tale of such fundraisers in Oregon. In 2003, the Eugene Register-Guard reported on similar efforts of parents who were hosting fundraisers to pay for a math teacher. Math classes were jeopardized because the then current math teacher was retiring and there was not enough money to hire a new math teacher. The parents and teachers decided to give their blood to fund the position. That is right, blood. After realizing that bake sales would not raise enough money, parents and teachers decided to sell their blood plasma to raise money to fund a teacher.

When it comes to education funding, it is increasingly parents and teachers who are scrambling to cover budget shortfalls; and, unfortunately, Oregon has been one of the States hit hardest by budget shortfalls. Across our State, schools are closing, increasing class sizes, or eliminating or cutting music, art, athletics, marching band, and other important so-called "extra-curricular" activities.

Oregon's school districts have carved a total of almost 500 days or 12 million instructional hours off the 2003 school year, and at least 1,100 teacher positions have been lost so far. Oregon has abolished State tests for writing, math, and science in middle schools; and some schools have received no new textbooks since 1988.